THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) As per extant RBI guidelines, scheduled commercial banks are permitted to grant loans to individuals only against gold ornaments and jewellery, and not against bullion/primary gold. For grant of such advances, the banks frame a suitable policy in this regard with the approval of their Board of Directors, including ceiling for such loans, margin and-rates of interest, etc. Based on the prevailing market price of gold, the nationalized banks periodically revise the rate of gold for calculating the value of the jewellery/ornaments for granting such loans.

LPG and CNG retail units in Tamil Nadu

*60. SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be please to state:

(a) the total quantum of LPG consumed by automobile owners in Tamil Nadu;

(b) the number of LPG retail units which have been established in Tamil Nadu for automobile users alongwith details in each town in Tamil Nadu;

(c) the proposals to meet the growing demands; and

(d) whether CNG retail units are functioning in Tamil Nadu and if so, how many, town-wise?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA). (a) The total sales of auto-LPG through Auto LPG Dispensing Stations (ALDS) set up by the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) during the year 2006-07, is 8751 Metric Tonnes (MTs) and during April-June, 2007 is 3447 MTs in the State of Tamil Nadu.

(b) OMCs are presently operating 34 ALDS in the State of Tamil Nadu. The district/town-wise details are given in the enclosed Statement (*See* below).

(c) OMCs propose to set up 37 more ALDS in the State of Tamil Nadu.

(d) No, Sir.

Statement

Details of Auto LPG dispensing Stations (ALDS) in the State of Tamil Nadu as on 30.06.2007

District/town where ALDS are operating	Number of ALDS
1	2
Chennai	22
Tiruvallur	2
Salem	1
Madurai	4
Kanchipuram	2

1	2
Coimbatore	2
Erode	1
GRAND TOTAL:	34

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Opposition to the merger of Air India and Indian

286. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have finalized the merger of Air India and Indian;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether some employees unions have opposed the merger; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government has decided to merge the two airlines with a new company. For this purpose, a new company, National Aviation Company of India Limited (NACIL) has been incorporated on 30.3.2007. The legal and procedural formalities for merger would be completed shortly and the complete merger of the two airlines is expected to be effected in a phased manner over the next two years.

(c) and (d) Some employee unions have submitted a representation expressing their concerns on the merger. On receipt of the representation, Government had invited the concerned Unions/Associations on 27.07.2007 and had allayed their apprehensions and reiterated that all employees would remain unaffected as a result of the merger.

New aviation policy

†287. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a new aviation policy has been formulated by Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Ministry of Defence have raised some objections with regard to the newly laid policy; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi